

# DESIGN

Vol XXXII, No. 7

DECEMBER, 1930

■ With the approach of Christmas, persons, even moderately atuned to design, every year have their sensibilities badly offended by the vast quantities of toys and gifts unloaded in the shops everywhere in America. While these are generally bad they are bought in unbelievable quantities and distributed in all directions. With few exceptions these fabulous quantities of purchases have none of the feelings of harmony, simple beauty and unity associated with the spirit of the Great Day, the most celebrated holiday of the year, but represent vast expenditure of money and incredible influence in propagating more and more bad taste. Does it seem too much to consider that a Christmas gift should have some qualities of good design? Teachers of art, designers and students have a serious responsibility for does not the taste of the nation lie largely in their hands?

Is there not much to be done in the way of taking a definite stand against the bad and encouraging all that is good? Certainly each individual can do something to encourage merchants to carry articles of good taste, by purchasing only fine designs and to persuade parents, particularly, to select beautiful toys for their children.

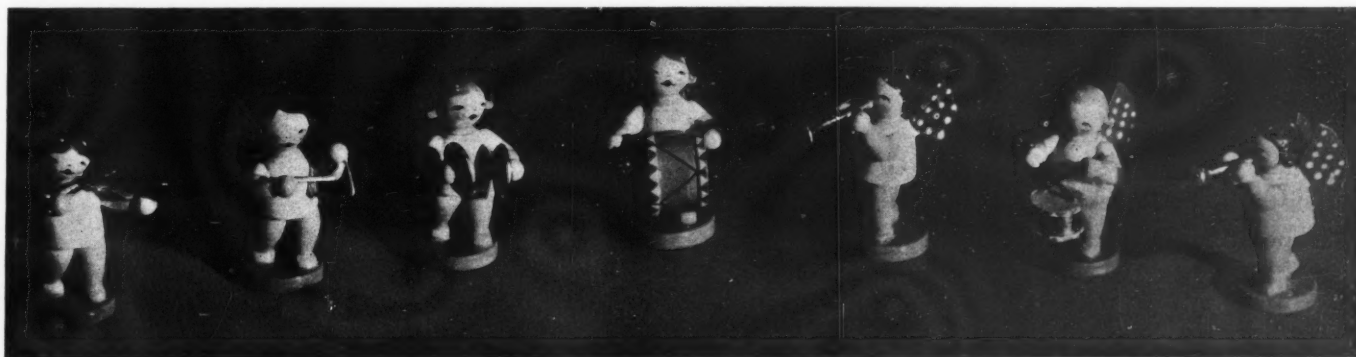
It is in the case of children's toys that the situation is most acute for imagine the harm done public taste in general when we force upon the plastic minds of children objects of extremely bad design when instinctively children have a peculiar liking for toys of simple lines, mass and form, particularly rich in color. Because of their ability to see only essentials, they like a subordination of details, have no regard for naturalistic effects and are captivated by a type of design which we usually describe as imaginative or creative. Quite naturally so, for they are extremely imaginative, creative beings themselves.

Sometimes, though rarely, one does find a shop where gifts and toys are really beautiful, like Rena Rosenthal's of New York, where such fine judgment and discrimination is shown that a trip to such a place proves a forceful

lesson in design. As examples of really fine beautiful toys there are reproduced on this and following pages of this issue some German wooden figures of marked art qualities. While these figures are produced commercially they have a rare simplicity of form; their parts having been made of wood, turned on a lathe, cut and assembled in charming relationship into a unified whole. What movements are possible are simple ones and nothing of the realistic is outstanding, in fact the simple fundamental forms and relationships are dominant in every case. We are told that they were copied from the figures drawn years ago by Maria Caspari. However, are they not inspirations for our designers and purchasers of toys?

■ DESIGN for a year, makes an exceptionally fitting Christmas gift and appropriate for almost anyone, whether a member of your immediate family or a friend. If the person is an artist, amateur, designer, decorator, teacher or student, such a gift will be particularly welcome, for at no time has there been a greater interest in the field of the decorative arts than at the present. This is shown by the fact that in the great cities of the world large expositions of this kind are held from time to time and industries of various kinds which in the past considered design unimportant are now seeking employees who have a keen sense of design. What more certain and lasting gift could be selected? Certainly on the Christmas list of everyone there are those for whom our publication would be the very best choice. You may be the means of starting some young talent on the road to fame, or of adding more joy in the work of some teacher or of giving real inspiration to some designer. It is very simple, too, for on the receipt of the subscription price, name and address we will forward promptly a unique Christmas announcement card which you in turn can present to the recipient on Christmas Day. We advise sending in your order early. For simplifying your Christmas problems and for assurance of an appropriate choice we recommend DESIGN.

## A Celestial Orchestra



A  
NATIVITY  
GROUP



No child or student of design could fail to be struck by the extreme simple beauty of these Christmas figures



## A CANDLE- STICK



This charming figure which serves as a candlestick comes from Germany and is wood enameled in harmonious colors





## RHYTHMIC PATTERNS IN THE GRAPHIC ARTS

BY MABEL F. WILLIAMS

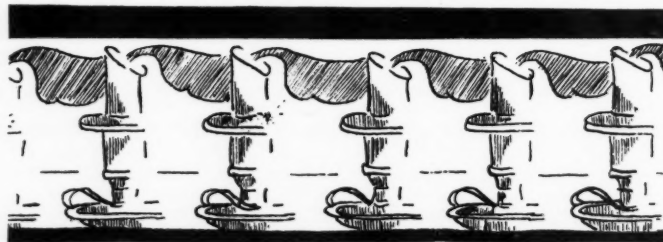
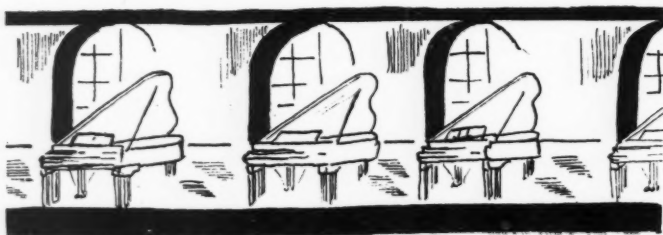
All designs with this article were made by first year students in the Lindblom High School of Chicago Illinois

■ One of the fundamental facts about our structure as human beings is the law of rhythm. Physiologically we live only as long as the law of rhythm is operating. The heart beat is followed by a pause of equal length; our lungs take in air and breathe out impurities in turn; our steps alternate with what should be entire regularity. Our habits of life are based upon an alternation of strain and rest, awakes and sleep, upon regular intervals of food consumption and digestion. Any departure from the rhythm of our lives is followed by slow or rapid wreckage of the machine which we have overstrained through lack of conformity to the law of rhythm.

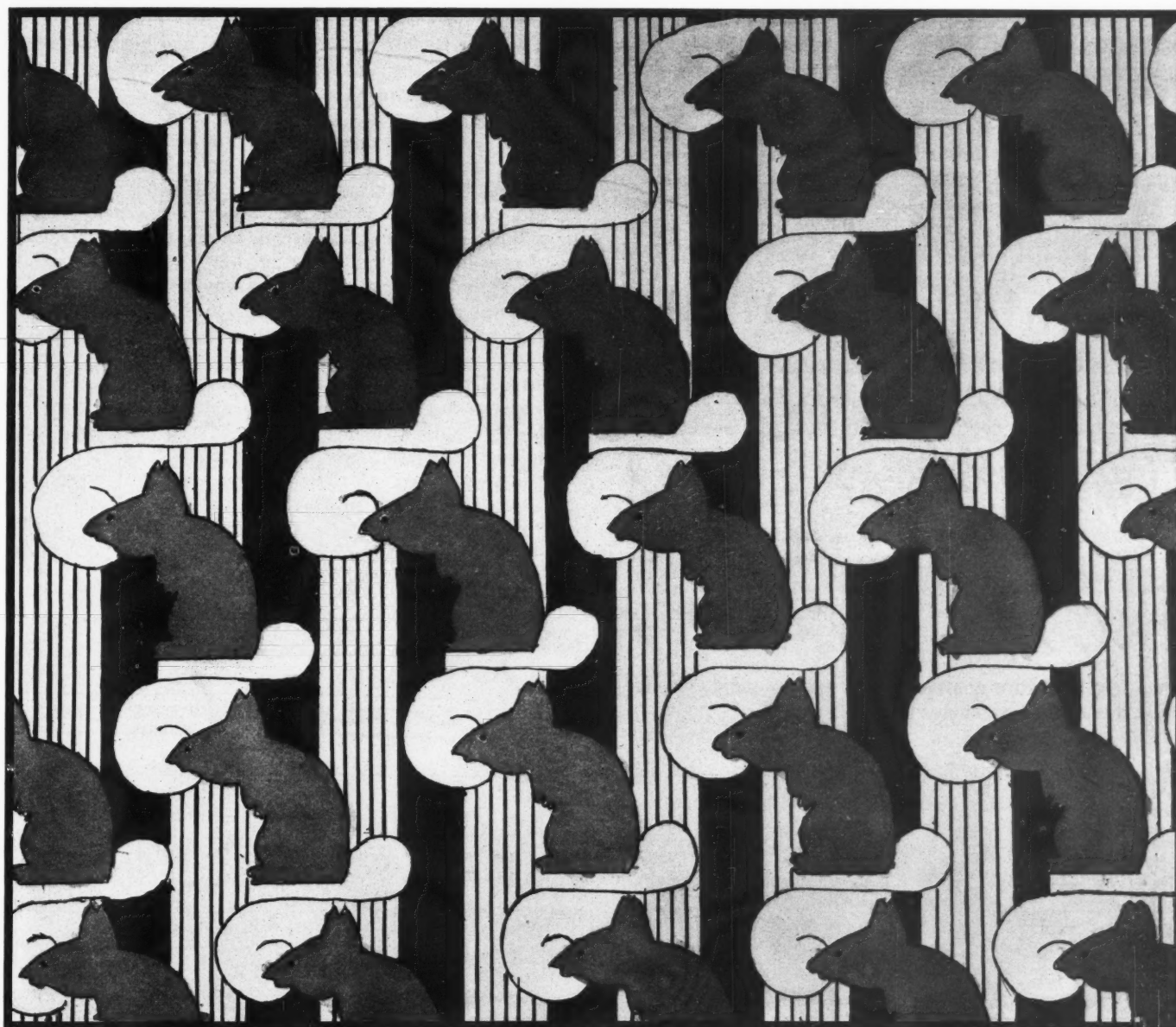
All of the organic rhythmic procedures are unconscious. All of the muscular rhythmic movements are achieved first by conscious effort. The child's first movements in walking are far from being rhythmic but as soon as he masters the technique of the new achievement rhythm accompanies it, it becomes unconscious and it is attended with satisfaction or pleasure. The dancer makes the same muscular response to rhythm that most of us do in walking. Onlookers enjoy vicariously the thrill of rhythmic movement which is existing and being expressed in the dancer. Music which comes

to us in perfect rhythm brings an intellectual rhythm response through our muscular responses. We are told that "beating time" with foot or finger is a lower form of appreciation but I am of the opinion that the reaction of beating time occurs in all of us though we succeed in conscious control of it for social reasons. We have many records to show that back in the childhood of the race, mankind recorded his sense of rhythm in repetitions of schematic or symbolic forms which he used as borders on vases, etchings on his monuments, and the like. A compilation of those records from earliest times till now would be evidence of the fact that the more unconscious records of the ancients, primitive, and isolated, are more vital, more sincere, and hence more worthy of perpetuity than the sometimes over-conscious productions of our contemporaries which come under the class of "efforts" in art products.

From such a mass of evidence that the rhythm sense has always been expressed in design, a teacher of design should learn her lesson about procedure. She should make use of an inborn responsiveness rather than present a procedure which starts with memorized rules of spacing. The intellectual approach to art can never produce anything







The border below and all-over design above both have a simple direct rhythm of line and mass



creative without the complement of the emotions, even in the most sophisticated and surely in the presentation of expressional art to the unsophisticated the emotions should be appealed to first with the intellectual approach as a later corollary. It is more economical in the amount of really creative product which it will obtain. It is more stimulating to the student and more lasting in results since it is a development of something inborn rather than something administered from without like artificial respiration. To use rhythm as the basis of a course in design is to base the course upon a sound psychological principle, the securing of a pattern on cloth or paper through existing muscular co-ordinations. Although this paper deals with the problem from the Junior or Senior High School level, it seems necessary to emphasize the fact that the earlier such responses are called forth the better. Simple and frequent exercises in counting, clapping, marching, nodding, and then marking are a part of the educational heritage of every child from the first grade up. Their records are only approximate in



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BY MABEL F. WILLIAMS

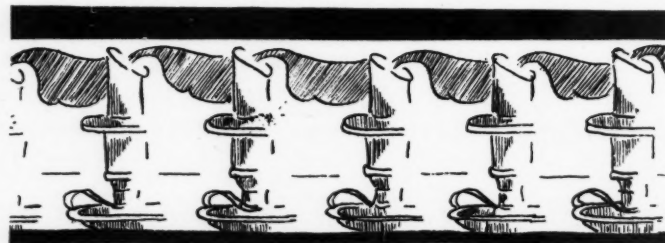
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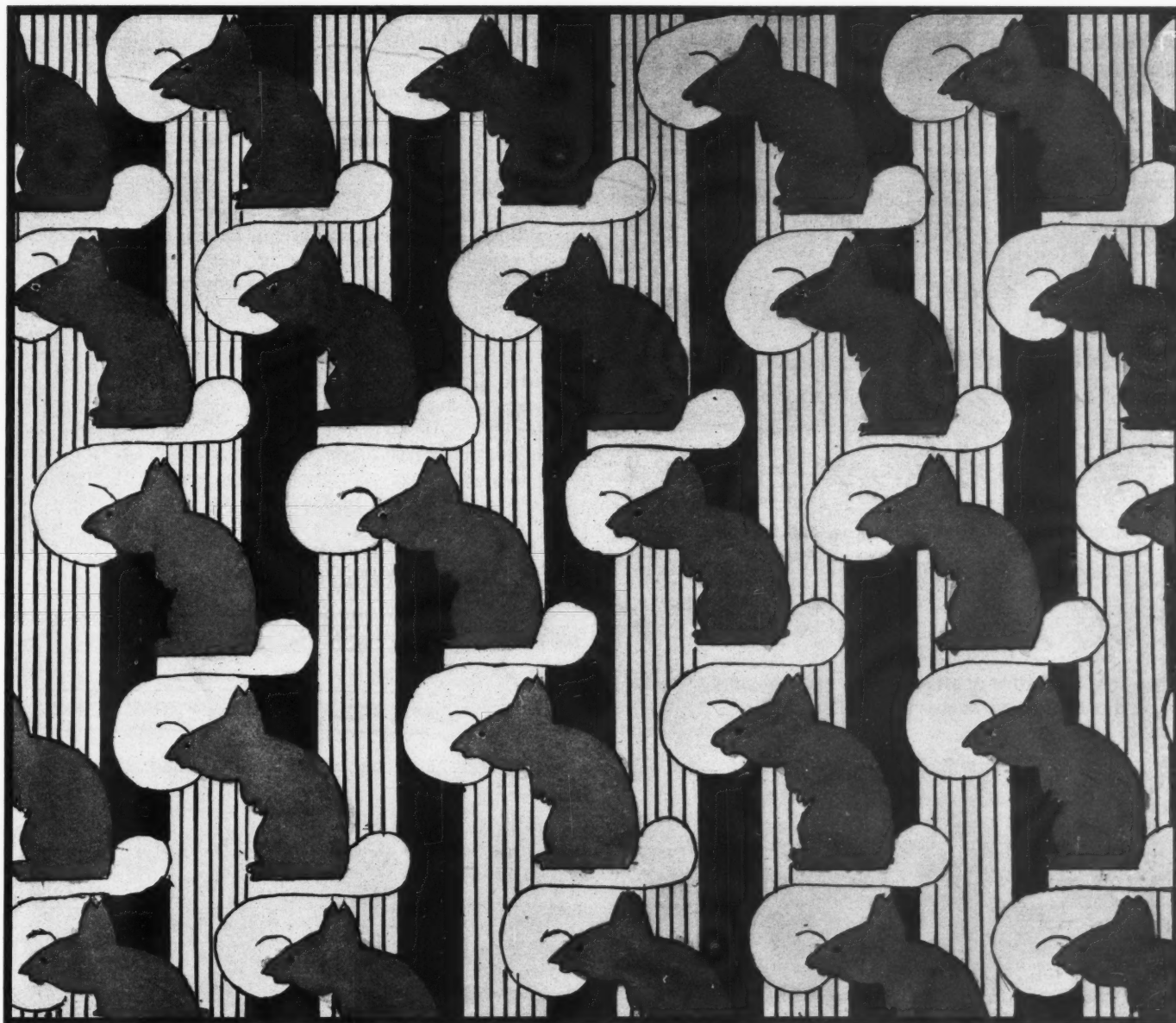
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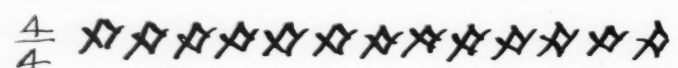
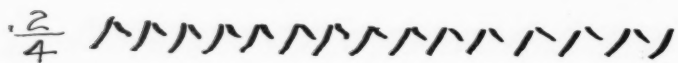
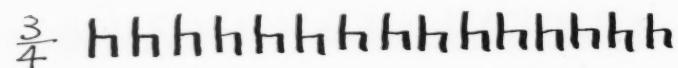
FOR DECEMBER

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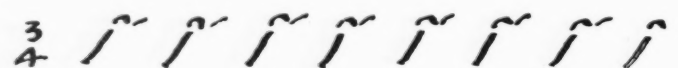


placing since the pencil, crayon, or brush is an untried medium but they are often stimulating and they do gain through repeated manipulation; they are records of growth in power.

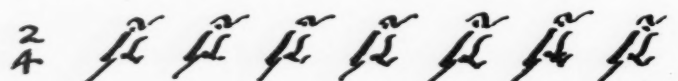
The following series of lines were build up on  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and  $\frac{1}{4}$  rhythm. If these preliminary steps have not been presented to students in the lower grades they must obviously be a part of the procedure for junior or senior high school students. They might be called the "work songs" of the class.



The beginning of composite borders lies in the placing of the first lines to count as follows:



Upon this structure another series, also to count, is placed and a third count completes the border.

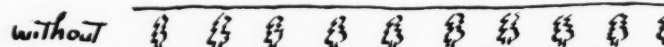


This carries us to the more complex type of border or surface which may be termed the "built-up" border. It was very evident that the limitations of the first borders could be overcome by covering the ground again, the obvious thing here being that the second and third series of lines may not be placed so consciously to count since they have to fall into the places which are waiting for them. There is no new "point of departure" then, for the assignment for high school students. Anything may be used as a motif. The first lines are placed according to their "rhythm sense". Accuracy of spacing is possible but it is not stressed at this point. Other lines are added, lines which fall into their places and which add to the significance of the shape and to the line pattern of the entire border.

Thus far no principles of design have been sought consciously but to a certain extent the most important principles have occurred of necessity! Denman Ross says, "Design is order; and in supreme instances it produces beauty". If that is true, the entire class has, willy-nilly, produced design since their records are orderly repetitions. It is the teacher's opportunity to carry these far enough so that at least a certain per-cent achieve the beautiful! Together with orderly repetition they have achieved simplifications and skillful simplification is always an attribute of good design since it achieves thereby the qualities of the symbolic. Nations in their greatest periods of art have raised mere representation to the point of design through line pattern, one of the attributes of which is elimination of

detail which does not contribute in any way to the structure of the whole. Ruskin says, "The animal and bird drawings of the Egyptians are, in their finest age, quite magnificent; magnificent in two ways: first, in keenest perception of the main forms and facts in the creature; and second, by the grandeur of line by which their forms are abstracted and insisted upon, making every ibis or vulture a sublime spectre of ibis or vulture power." Also, "The way for students to get some of this gift again is never to pass a day without drawing some animal, allowing themselves the fewest possible lines but resolving that whatever is characteristic of the animal shall in some way be shown".

Continuity or cadence is not always secured nor might it always be necessary, but the feeling for cadence is in most of us and can be made to operate consciously and with great pleasure. There are two ways of presenting it to the class. The borders made first are put to a vote of the class in which exercise it is very obvious that those possessing continuity or cadence through the direction of line have received most votes. Analysis by the class will reveal the fact that those which please them are the repeats which show no awkward pause between units. Borders should then be built up by the instructor some of them possessing continuity and others without it.



Those which do not possess it should be altered so that there is continuity.



An analogy may be made here between music just being learned and the type of borders without continuity. The young musician gropes, fumbles, and finally achieves one measure. The pause before the next measure is finally accomplished, causes real agony on the part of the player himself and all of the listeners. The young musician longs for the time to come when one measure will swing along into the next in rhythm and he labors toward that end.



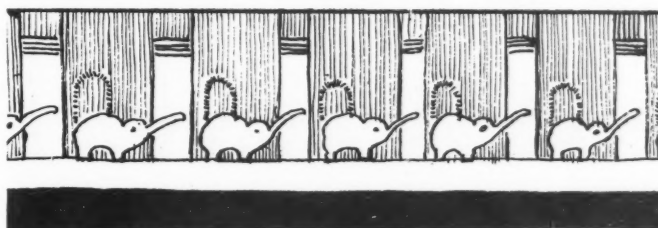
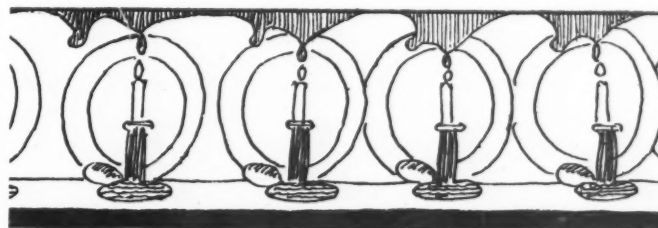
What of the subject matter in these borders? Even if the instructor dictated the subject matter to be used, there would still be creative achievement shown in the considerable difference in the products. But again we should profit by the records of early peoples. They used the items in the world about them; constant repetition of them made the useless details fall away, the vital part which remained being sometimes so abstract a symbol that the original source is often in dispute. The fact that onlookers may not recognize the design source, however, is immaterial. If the Creator himself used shapes which were meaningful to Him, the very last simplification of them possesses vitality. Persian rugs are evidence of this.

All of the objects in the world about us possess decorative elements. It has been the mission of the artist

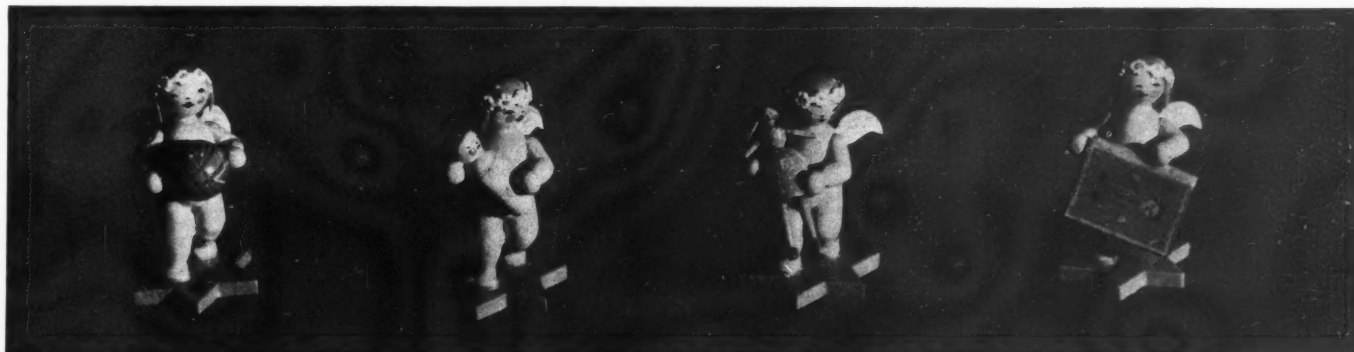
many, many times to prove this to us. The young student designer has more raw material at his hand to translate into its decorative elements than his short course in high school will ever permit him to complete. The accomplishment of some part of this rich field will not only place him in the position of a life long appreciator of the arts and of the world about him, but it may also make him a fertile designer — never at a loss for material, never hackneyed since he works from basic laws of creation instead of by artificial “first aids to designers”.

During such procedure the gain in enjoyment of line pattern and the ability to achieve it is obvious. Such a course can not result in real growth unless it is of sufficient length so that continued concentration will result in refinements of line pattern, and greater keenness of appreciation of the decorative possibilities in the subject chosen. The class should be very productive until borders and surface patterns are achieved easily and with skill; until they come to enjoy their own and the products of their fellow classmates. Success will crown their efforts since the elements of success lie within themselves. There will be enjoyment at the time of learning which insures abiding interest in the subject. Power to perform and abiding interest are the two goals sought for. With conditions as described every pupil cannot fail to achieve most pleasing results in design.

The borders below are informal preliminary exercises made to reflect our times just as designs of early peoples usually reflected their age

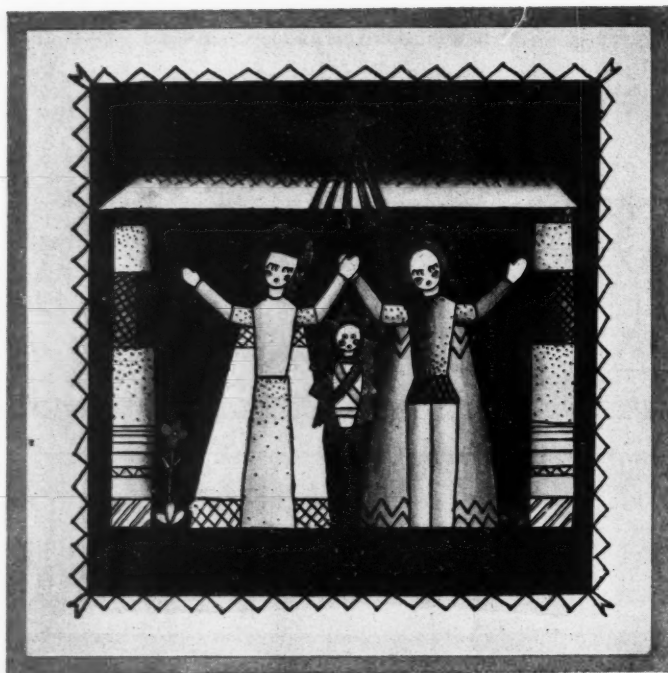


A group of playful little angels with flower crowns and standing on stars



This more earthy group below while built on the same lines are all prepared for the beach





## CHRISTMAS CARDS

BY EMMY ZWEYBRUCK

The charm of a Christmas card lies particularly in the imagination and simplicity of its conception which is so admirably shown in these four cards by Emmy Zweybruck of Vienna and reproduced here by the courtesy of Rena Rosenthal. The former who was a pupil of Dr. Cizek possesses a distinctive creative style is a teacher of rare ability who promises to come to America soon



In these two primitive angels the designer has achieved a simplicity which is akin to the directness of a child's expression





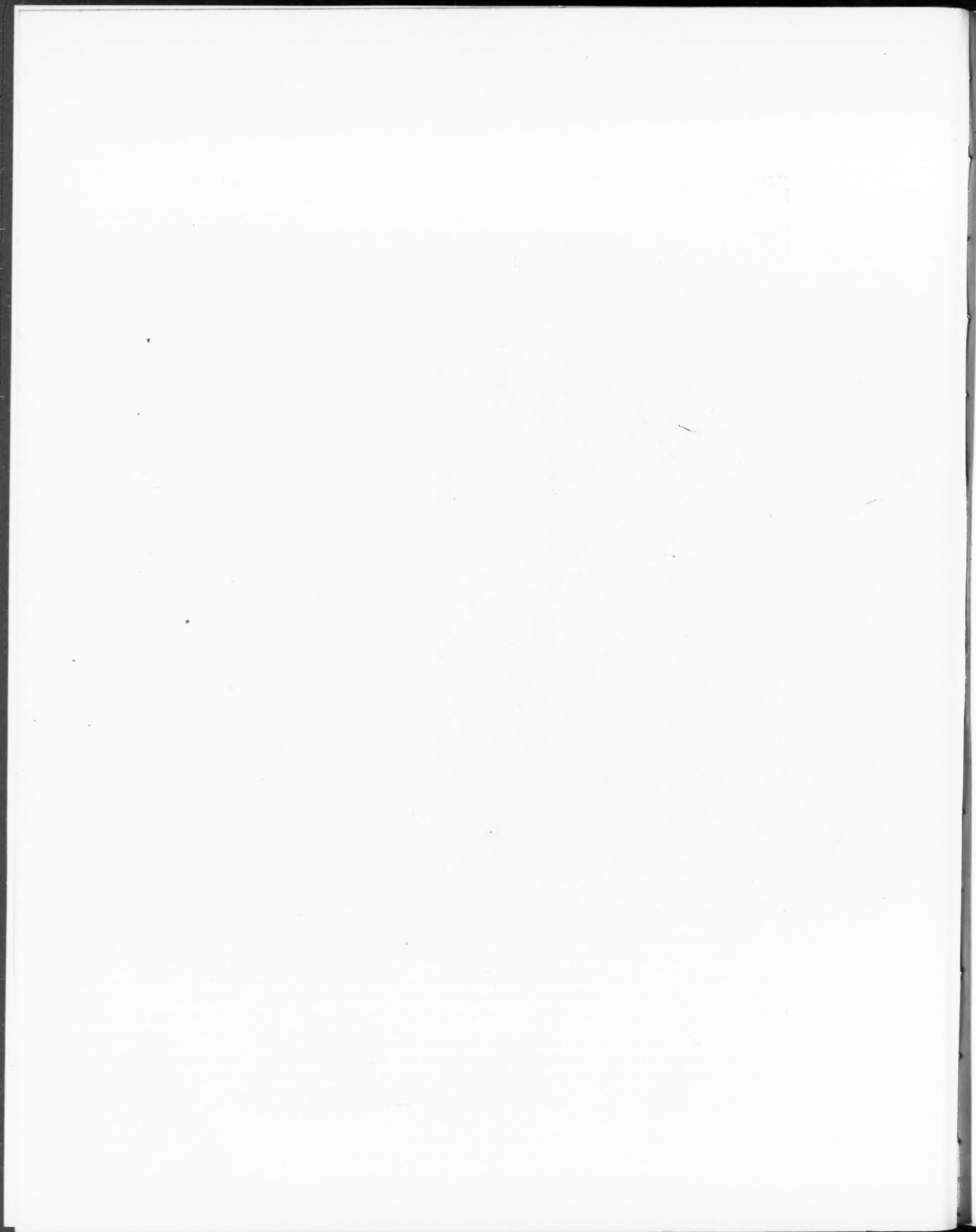


# CHRISTMAS FIGURINES

Courtesy Rena Rosenthal

DECEMBER  
1930  
Supplement to  
DESIGN

Copyright, 1930  
KERAMIC STUDIO PUB. CO.  
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK



# HAND BLOCKED PRINTS

BY MARY E. RAGAN



## FORM

■ The process of block printing is very old. It has been identified with the art experiences of ancient Eastern peoples from time immemorial and through its use civilizations have handed down to us some of their finest art expressions. It and its related processes have been the means of fine inspirational expression by artists of modern times. It is an old process even in the art programs of our schools and as such we are apt to think of it there as a stereotyped kind of repeat motif almost lacking in any kind

The course is elective covering two periods per day. The intention of the course is to give the students an insight into an appreciation of art quality whether in commercial art, in industrial art or in the Fine Arts; to direct them toward understanding that art quality means a recognition of the same fundamentals, no matter what individual process or means is used, whether it is found in prehistoric art or in twelfth century art or in modern art.

The term "modern" as applied to Art has a very un-

These illustrations of brilliant textiles all by different pupils of Miss Ragan at Textile High School of New York City represent a variety of moods and styles

of art quality or feeling of life.

I believe that any applied process is only a means which an individual may use to give tangible expression to his ideas and as such it is not an end in itself but wholly secondary to the art quality and power of the design. Therefore no process of applied design may ever be classed as old or worn out if this one idea is held and pursued, namely, that the thing that matters is the art power which the individual has to express.

In my opinion the process of block printing has all the possibilities of an ideal means of expression for young students and is especially fine for those of high school age. It provides almost unlimited range of opportunity in the field of design. It allows the play of variation in texture through the handling of the tool and great freedom of expression for the adventurous imagination. The technique is easy, the tools simple and the actual development of the designs as it works out on the block through the cutting fascinates the student making the technical skill develop naturally.

The prints which accompany this article have been hand blocked on fabric by students in Textile High School in New York City.





## VISIONS



certain meaning. It is very misleading at times and entirely meaningless at others. If we but consider the finest art epochs in the history of the world we shall find that the art productions of these different periods vary definitely as to individual expression. For example compare the following: the cave man's drawing of a bison; early Egyptian design; decorative use of motifs on Cypriote pottery; portraiture of Coptic age; Italian primitives; South African Negro Sculpture. This comparison will show that the same

qualities which make for fineness in one case will be found to a similar degree in every equally fine art expression though in each case it is an entirely individual one belonging to a separate time and place. These old things are modern in the true meaning of the term. And so the things that make art modern are self expression, creative imagination and recognition of fundamentals, using motifs expressing the time, the place, the thinking which belong with the period.

# ARCHES

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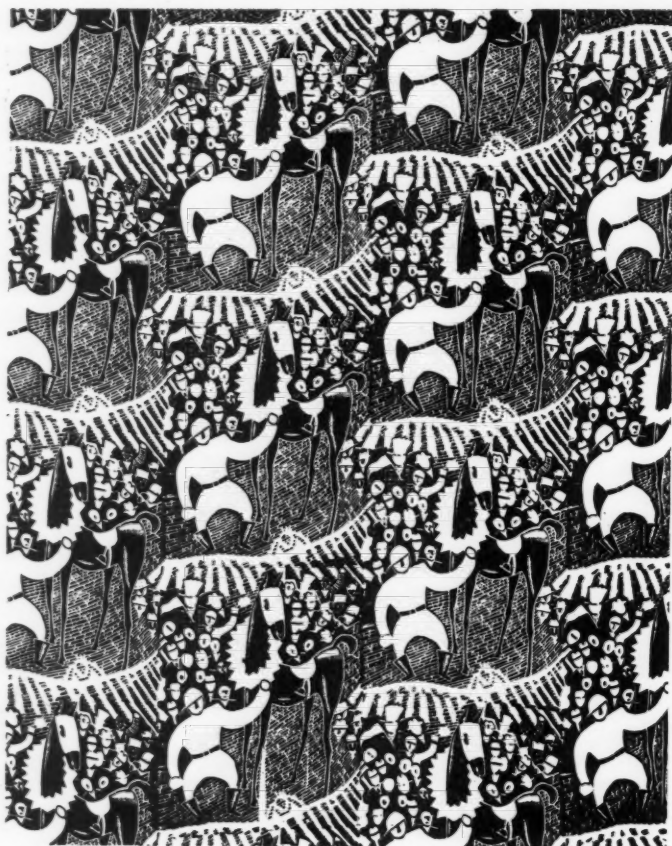


In using modern motifs with these high school students we have tried to guide them toward a logical way of thinking about things, happenings and customs of the locality and time in which they are living. We have allowed them the liberty of expressing themselves as they feel about these things. And this is the reason for the subjects which they have sometimes chosen. The subway, the skyscraper, the rush home, air traffic, are familiar ideas to them. It would be unwise to give these students motifs from Coptic sources,

from early Greek pottery, from the Egyptian, or from any historic source and expect them to do creative designing. At best they could only adapt these historic motifs which would give them little beyond the exercise of copying and therefore defeat the intention of creativeness in design. It would take them entirely out of their own experience and atmosphere and make them feel dependent upon a copying knowledge of borrowed motifs.

The decorative fabrics reproduced here show one result





## THE DERBY WINNER

of an intensive study of design and give some notion of the power which the students have developed during the course in Creative Design. The students who make up these classes are regular high school boys and girls with no reputation for brilliancy or art power; but they are young people with a native craving for the opportunity of self expression and upon this last idea is the course in Creative Design based. They possess what all youth has in abundance;—imagination, love of the aesthetic in creative expression and instinctive capacity for understanding those principles and qualities which make for fine art.

The application of our design is usually made for some form of decorative fabric, either block printed, screen printed or hand dyed but a very small portion of the entire time is given to the application processes. At least two-thirds of the entire course is devoted to the business of designing. We work with the usual media;—charcoal, ink and color. Charcoal is our most reliable medium, especially in the early stages of the student's development. Technique is of minor importance and is seldom thought of as such except as it becomes necessary to the student's expression in a particular problem. It usually develops with its need, otherwise it interferes with thinking and feeling in design.

The series of problems and exercises which make up the progressive steps of the course aim to give the students many different experiences in creative expression. These call upon the imagination, ingenuity, simplicity of expression, bigness of ideas and power for eliminating detail.

No effort is spent in memorizing formal definitions of art principles and art elements. The students acquire an understanding of the things which make for art quality by recognizing them in their own creations.

In the early part of the course, the students work almost entirely in two-dimensional design and toward an understanding of spatial relationships, rhythm through mass, rhythm through line, rhythm through color. We try to focus the attention upon the power of simplicity and more especially upon their own interpretations and feelings about the things they are doing. As their development and understanding proceed we work toward the more profound things of form and reality in relation to design. The work is made very difficult but they like it because they are producing something that they definitely understand and control.

We use quantities of reference material selected from both the old and the new. But we use this material for study and entirely separate from the students' actual creative expression periods. We never adapt or copy for direct use in designing, but we try to have the student understand the likeness between sincere modern art and sincere historic art, to acquaint them with the work of industrial artists and with that of fine artists who work sincerely in the industrial field. We direct them toward recognizing quality and art fundamentals in their research work in art magazines, in museums and in current exhibitions. I wish to make the point that the important thing in the course is the students' growth, intellectually and emotionally, through

## GOSSIP

DESIGN



## AIR TRAFFIC

creative expression which develops an understanding of fine art quality. The block printing on fabric is just one of the very pleasant incidents following an intensive study of design. I contend that the problems and exercises of designing are of far more importance to the student than the process of block printing. In fact it is the power of the design which makes the print worth while. But it is encouraging and thrilling to see one's efforts produced in a professional way and this satisfaction is enough compensation to the student for spending the time and effort in cutting and printing the block.

The mechanical steps of the process of block printing are too generally known to need repetition, but I will mention them by way of refreshing the memory.

Designing the block is the most important step and the student must be able to foresee in the single unit the possibilities of the all-over repeat. The design is developed with charcoal in a very free way and the edges are matched up for the repeat. Next a very careful tracing is made for transfer on the block.

We use battleship linoleum, mounted on a wood block, one inch high and cut to exact size. The design is traced very accurately on the linoleum and the connecting lines and masses of the design must be cut carefully. There should be originality and individuality in cutting, but there is also the other obligation of keeping the character of the original design. We use several shapes of the regular linoleum tools or gouges. The TIF Lino-pens are much less expensive and are very possible. But since they are of inferior quality they are much less reliable than the other tools. Printer's ink is next rolled on a metal or glass plate by means of a brayer or composition roller and the block is inked by passing the loaded brayer over the surface of the block in several directions. The fabric used in printing may be inexpensive but should have some texture to avoid a flat slick finish.

The mechanical process of block printing may be learned through experimentation by anyone. There is always opportunity in the hand blocked print for adventure in design in a fresh vigorous style—but after all the important thing is to create a fine design which functions through the medium of the block print.

No more fertile field can be recommended to the student, a craftsman interested in intensifying the vitality of his design than this extremely interesting art. There is no limit to the many possibilities offered for experience with the numerous materials available to almost any one. Equipment need not be elaborate. Much can be done in studying the outcome of all sorts of textures, various weaves as well as papers. Using many different qualities of linoleum, wood or substitutes for the block will produce valuable experience as will work with printers' ink of many qualities and colors; ways of applying ink to the block and application of pressure in printing. Yet in all of these the aim should always be to produce a pleasing well designed result in which all factors combine to build up a fine feeling of unity.



JAZZ



## THE PRIMITIVES

AIR TRAFFIC on page 157 won the One Hundred Dollar Prize for printed velveteen for sports wear in an exhibition of designs for printed fabrics held by the Art Alliance of America at the Art Center, New York City. Almost the entire show was the work of professional artists from every section of the country with a great many designs competing in each class. The judges awarding the prizes were designers of experience from the large representative textile houses of the country. The handling of the motif in this design shows a unified alllover movement, a variety in spacing, in dark and light, in technique, and is a good illustration of the ideas which were developed in this article

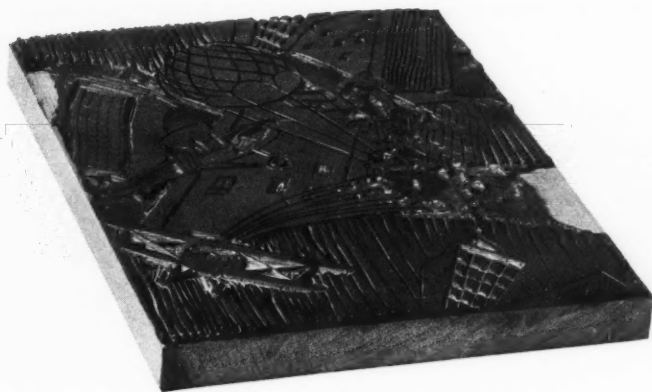
## THE STORM



## THE ELEVATED TRAINS

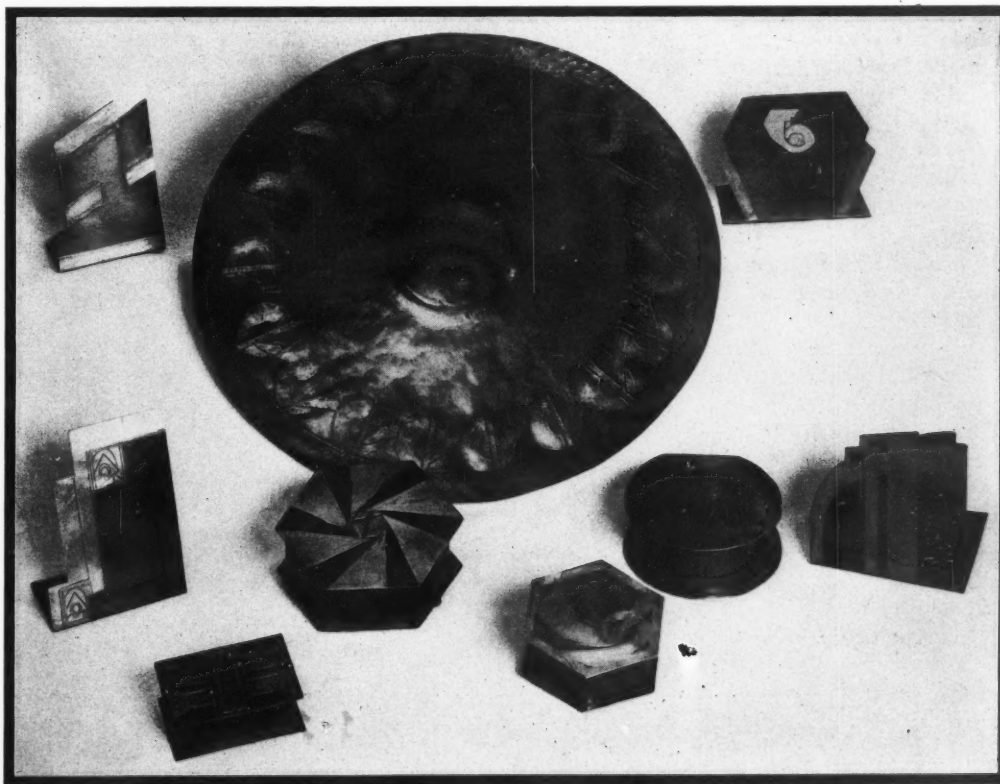






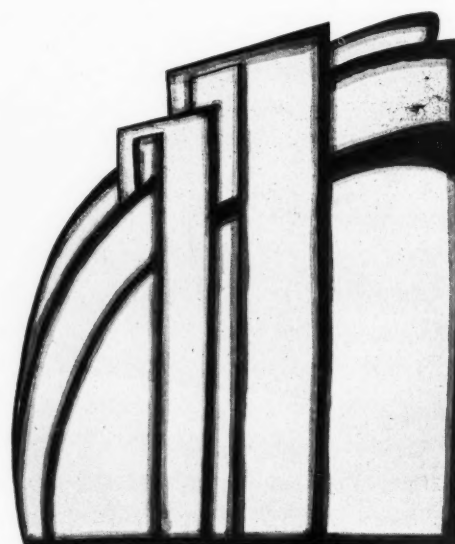
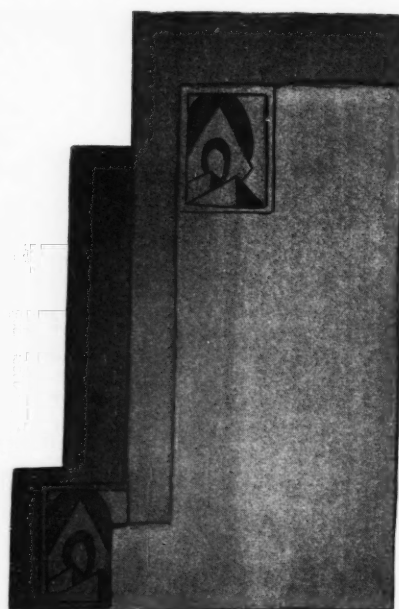
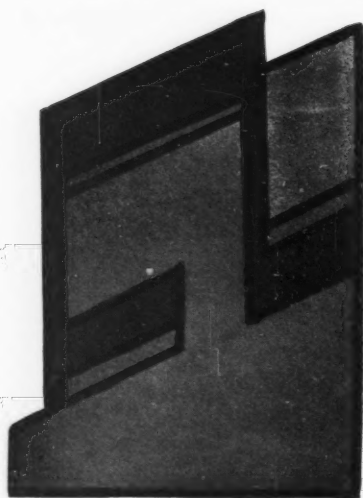
■ The linoleum block shown above is the original for the "Air Traffic" design on page 157 and may illustrate some points in the cutting process. The beveled edge allowing a broad base for the relief is a necessary feature and gauges should be handled in such way as to allow the bevel to slant outward from the edge of the relief printing area thus preventing any possibility of crumbling under the heavy pressure of printing. Each gauge has a special adaptability and gives the variation in texture which may be seen in the illustrations of this article.

■ Further information regarding tools, sources and materials to be used; books and illustrative matter regarding the interesting art of block printing or further details regarding the beautiful work of Miss Ragan's pupils may be had by writing to Design. In our opinion this art is one of the most helpful and practical methods of teaching design to children from the first grade up. With young children there are a variety of very easily handled materials which are quite satisfactory to use.



These metal boxes, plate and book ends made by pupils in Alhambra City High School Alhambra California are discussed in the article on pages 160 and 161 ■ ■





Figures A B and C

## PROBLEMS IN METALCRAFT

BY MARIE VAUGHAN SMITH

Illustrations with this article are from the classes of Mrs. Smith, Alhambra City High School Alhambra California

■ Two years ago I became weary of the designs produced by my class in metal craft. Scrolls, scarabs, "something like that tall boy made last year", or an owl for book-ends "because it is the symbol of wisdom" were among the over-worked motifs by my tradition bound class. My suggestions for something different in design brought forth the objectives of the class. One was, that they had never seen any designs for rings, boxes, book-ends, etc., that were different and the other was that if too much time was spent on design they could not get enough Christmas presents completed. To change these objectives was my first problem. I displayed abandoned problems by previous classes and held a class discussion as to the causes for the lack of interest to complete the problems. Obviously, the poor design had played its part in discouraging completion. I held class discussions on the fitness of the design motif to the material it was to enrich, striving to bring out the fact that there was nothing in common in the textures of feathers, flowers, and metal. Such discussions were tolerated but not accepted by the majority of the class as evinced by such remarks as, "Why, I saw 'The End of the Trail' on a pair of book-ends and it was just as real."

There being a dearth of inspirational illustrative material on something different in metal craft designs at hand the tradition bound class were reluctant to believe that the heretofore unseen could be produced in designs for their problems in metal craft. The majority of the class did agree, however, that a difficulty existed in producing the designs for their problems and that if the design was interesting the problem would likely be also. With this new objective

the class agreed to forget their problems in metal and try several problems in spacing, subordination, rhythm, etc. Some of the problems given were:

1. Draw two rectangles of pleasing proportion, one vertical, one horizontal. Leave base and one side intact. Replace other lines by curved and oblique lines. Cut the area thus made by curved and oblique lines. Discussions of the results of this problem were held simultaneously with those on contours of copper book-ends, box tops and trays. Figures (a), (b), and (c) are examples of this problem and may be seen in adaptation to the completed problem in the accompanying photographs.

2. Establish a square, oblong, or circle as a center of interest to represent a stone. Support and enclose this center of interest by areas made up of parts of circles, squares, and triangles. Figures (d), (e), and (f) may be seen in completed rings in the accompanying photograph.

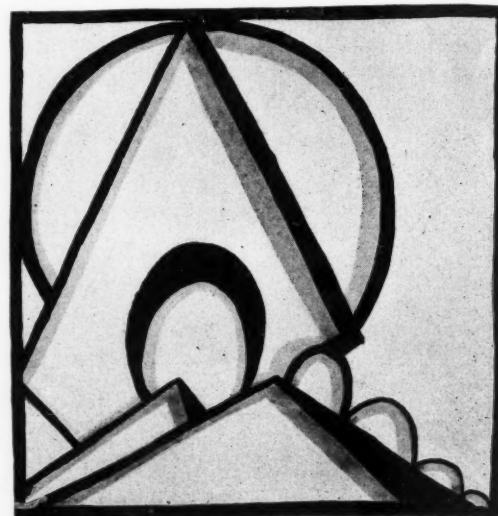
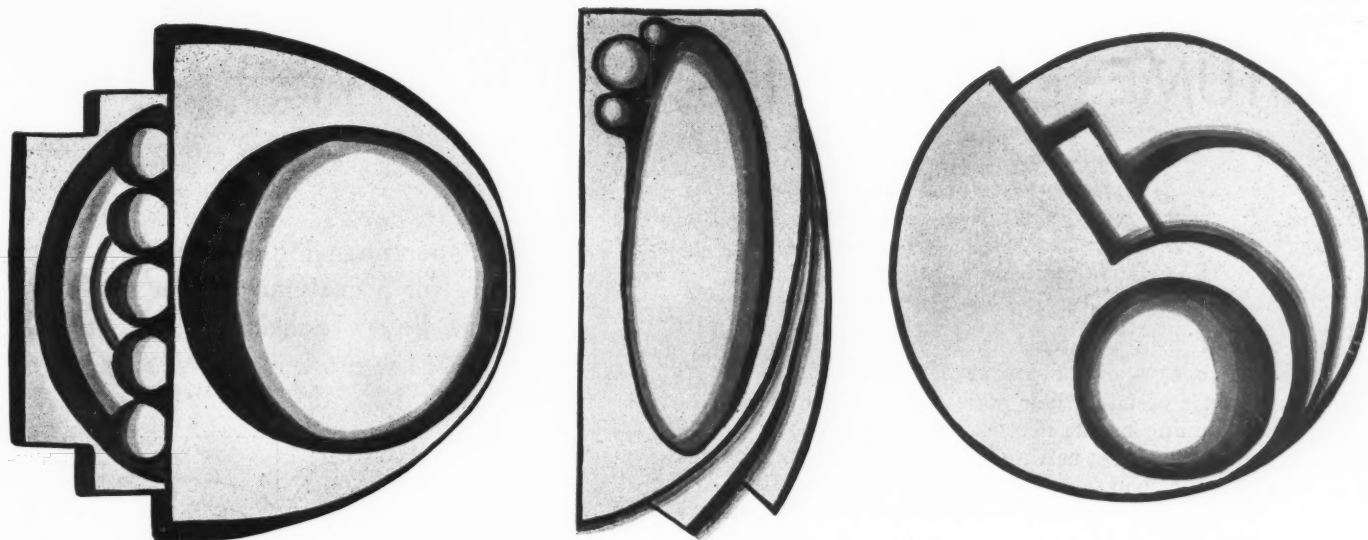


Figure H



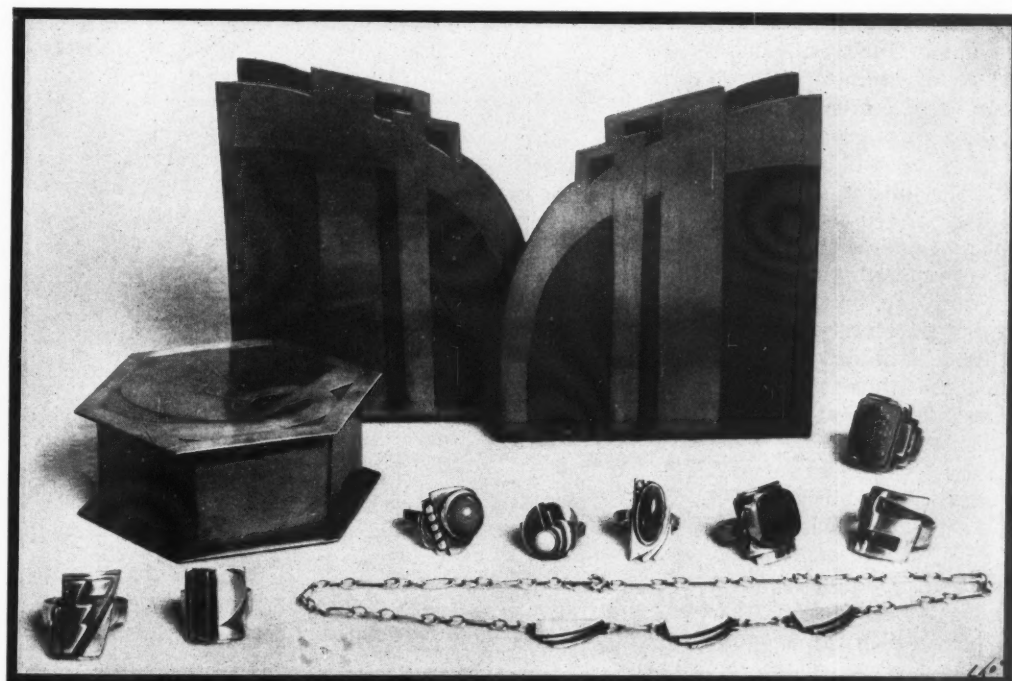
Figures D E and F

3. Cut a circle or square by curved and oblique lines keeping a dominant movement or growth from a center of interest. Figures (g) and (h) are examples of this problem which appears as spots of enamel on book-ends in the photograph.

Mirrors placed on various parts of these problems in design made interesting bi-symmetric motifs which were adapted to contours for trays, motifs for problems in applique, and motifs of repeats for borders. By the end of the quarter each student treasured his folio of designs. The students found more interest in adapting motifs of their own creation than adapting the traditional motifs. It has been most gratifying to note that graduate students who have returned to work independently have not reverted entirely to old habits in copying or adapting historic motifs. In cases where historic motifs are being used I have noted better spacing and consistency in adapting the motif to the material it is to enrich. The students' adventure into the unseen has seemed to have established a confidence, joy, and independence in their powers of creative expression.



Figure G



This attractive jewelry and metalcraft emphasizes the beauty of designing with simple geometric shapes

# COSTUME FIGURES IN DECORATIVE PANELS

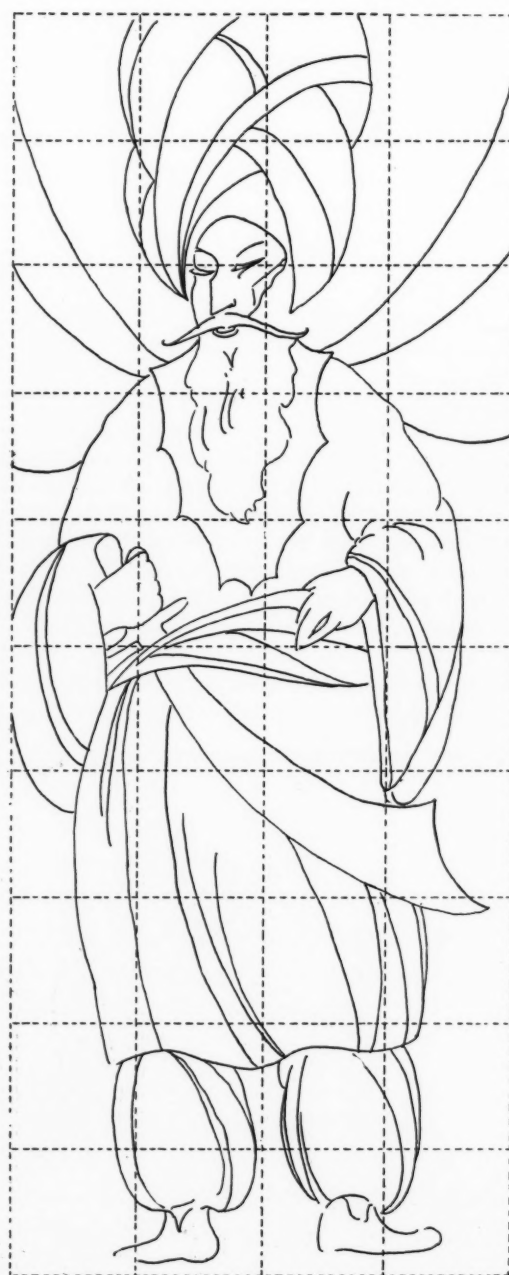
BY ALFRED G. PELIKAN

■ Close contact with art teachers in high schools, art schools and colleges, over a period of years, leads me to believe that sooner or later their assistance is bound to be asked in the planning of the decorations for a party, costume ball, pageant, or stage setting. Some of the difficulties which then present themselves are the questions of time, space, and money. Time is important, because with student help allowances have to be made for absences, delays, and other unforeseen circumstances which are apt to come up and retard the work. Space must be considered because it presents baffling problems of scale, accessibility, and not infrequently imposes handicaps which must be considered in advance. Money is, of course, necessary for paints, board, canvas, etc., and is usually very limited. The accompanying illustrations show some decorative panels which were made for the Annual Costume Ball of the Walrus Club of Milwaukee, a club composed of artists, musicians, writers, etc. An oriental setting was chosen which offered a splendid opportunity for design and color.

One of the first difficulties which presented itself was in that no nails or tacks of any kind could be used on the walls of the ball room of the hotel in which the party was to be given, and since the ceiling was very high and the picture moulding was of plaster, nothing could be suspended from the moulding. The problem was solved by deciding to paint decorative panels of oriental figures which could be placed around the room at intervals of about fifteen feet. Beaver board which comes 4' x 12' was used and this nailed on a wooden framework to keep it from warping or bending. Two small sketches to scale of 1" = 1' were made for each panel. One outline drawing which was squared off in 1" squares and one color sketch. The use of turbans, scimitars, beads, earrings, and motifs of an oriental nature made it comparatively easy to design these costumes without the use of reference material. As a class problem, one or two of these designs shown to students will stimulate much original interpretation. Both the outline drawings and the color sketches were given to a class in commercial art at the Boys' Technical High School. Some of these boys who worked on enlarging the panels are planning to follow the field of sign painting, window decorating, or will enter lithographic establishments, so that the opportunity to work on a large scale was the kind of experience needed by them and was carried on with a good deal of enthusiasm which led to a number of original problems initiated by the boys such as the making of large football posters, etc.

Making decorative panels offers a splendid field for design, especially in the filling of a definitely established unit with motifs which may vary from ships to modern sky scrapers. In order to increase the effect of size and height and to put more emphasis on the vertical, the figures were elongated and the panels raised about three feet off the ground by being placed on a little ledge which ran around the room. The bottom edge of the panels was placed on

The accompanying illustrations were made for a costume ball by students of the Boys' Technical High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin



The dotted lines show how the small designs were enlarged by use of squares



this ledge and the top held back by a thin wire which was stretched from one end of the room to the other.

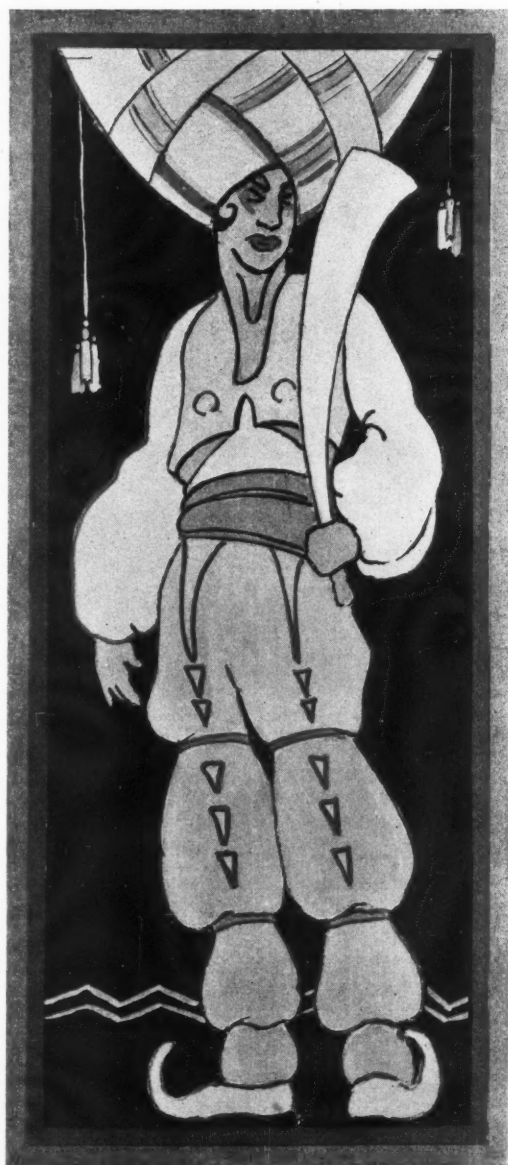
Electric lights were arranged to throw a light on the panel in such a manner as to keep it from traveling up to the ceiling, where it would be liable to detract from the costumed dancers on the floor.

For a school problem, the figures may be varied according to the type of party. They may be composed of colonial or historic figures; of medieval saints; Japanese prints; Byzantine kings; Greek dancers; circus performers; imaginative figures from Mars; athletic costumes, or anything that happens to suit the particular need. In each case the problem will be one of design and color. Other panels can be made by using large floral motifs; decorative

animals; undersea creatures, or simple large bi-symmetric motifs. A studied regard for space filling, for linear rhythm and for color harmony must be considered. For students without much experience, the color sketches may be made by cutting out simple patterns of various colored papers to which details may be added with show card color. For larger panels, it is important that the frame work on which the beaver board is to be tacked, is sufficiently solid and fixed with cross braces to prevent the board from warping. When painting the backgrounds and larger areas, alabastine or dry color powder, mixed with water and a little glue should be used, while for smaller areas of brilliant colors which are used in minor quantities, Prang Tempera colors are best suited.

In addition to being used as decorations on a large scale, smaller panels may be painted suitable for a boy's room or they may be batiked for wall hangings or painted on a decorative screen. Where a similar problem has been carried out by an entire high school class, a great deal of enthusiasm and interest has been manifested and some good original work obtained.

The two panels below are from the original small designs done in tempera



## A GAY TURK

Left



## A BOLD CHINEE

Right



## PAINTING ORIENTAL FIGURE PANELS ■ ■

This photograph shows the students of the Boys' Technical High School of Milwaukee at work on the enlarged panels made from the smaller designs such as are shown on preceding pages





## DESIGNING CHRISTMAS CARDS

BY IDA WELLS STROUD

Illustrations from the Newark School  
of Fine and Industrial Arts

■ The custom of sending greeting cards to express love and good cheer is a happy one and does much to brighten the yuletide for those who cannot celebrate in the good old way described in the early English verse,

"Be merrie all, be merrie all  
With holly deck the festive hall  
Prepare the song, the feast, the ball  
To welcome Merrie Christmase."

All can carry out the spirit of the verse, and greeting cards help to express what is in one's heart. So why not send them? A personal card designed by oneself is more intimate than the commercial ones, especially those purchased in the wholesale way. One may have his own

designs printed in large quantities, but "that is so different."

Good lettering is an important factor, as the card is sent primarily to convey the message. The wording is sometimes a prominent part of the design. Type may be used when one is unable to do the other, and good type is preferable to poorly drawn and badly spaced hand lettering. The ability to do good lettering is a worth-while possession. As a class problem, greeting card designing is an interesting subject. Students delight to work on it, and seem capable of expressing many ideas. The illustrations shown here are the result of work done in one of our design classes in the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art, formerly the Fawcett School of Industrial Arts. This lesson was begun by a short talk about the spirit in which to send greeting cards and what to try to express. Then several small sketches were made by each student before any of the large designs were started. This was done to get a collection of ideas on the papers,—just something to think about and talk



A  
CHRISTMAS  
CARD IN  
CHARCOAL



over,—before the final start was made from the one selected from the collection of each pupil.

The first ideas were suggested by the instructor, for instance; a Christmas bell was mentioned and five minutes were devoted by the entire class to making designs from the idea of bells. Then stars, and holly wreaths followed. Afterwards Santa Claus, reindeer, plum puddings, angels, trees, lights, and a large variety of subjects, until each student had a page or two filled with small motifs or ideas from which to work up the large designs. They were asked to select from all of these, the ones they would most enjoy working. Criticism was given on the small sketches, as well as suggestions as to how to enlarge upon the subject and to improve it. The method of reproduction must be considered if the work is to have practical value. Is the work to be reproduced by photography, zinc plates, linoleum blocks or perhaps by etching?

For linoleum block printing done by students, the masses should be simpler than for other processes, because of the difficulty in cutting small intricate shapes in linoleum; but

it is well known that simplicity is one of the keynotes to fine art. The illustrations for this article were worked out in large sizes, the full sheet of illustration board being used in most cases. This was done to allow greater facility for good execution, especially in the lettering. Several tones of charcoal were used, and the lettering was perfected in pencil on squared paper after it had been carried sufficiently far in charcoal to show the general effect. The lettering and the picture part of the design must harmonize. It would be poor taste to use very thin light lettering on a design of large heavy shapes and broad lines. Both parts must be thought out together and be in keeping with each other. The lettering is usually in the dark value, this making it easy to read, and helps out the pattern of dark.

In all work the class is encouraged to seek to express beauty rather than to record just commonplace facts. A well-balanced, dark and light pattern is worked for, and this is helped by putting in all the darks first, watching the effect produced to secure a good arrangement of rhythmic

# GREETINGS FOR THE NEW YEAR

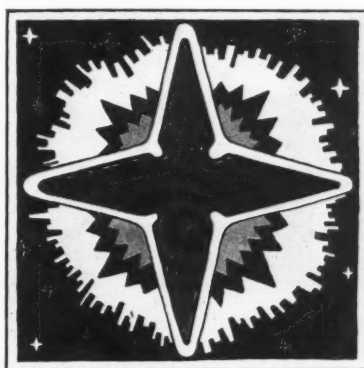
A  
COSTUME AR-  
RANGEMENT  
WITH SUITABLE  
LETTERING



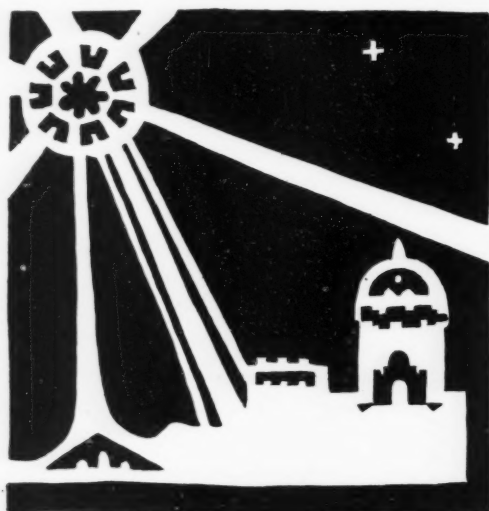
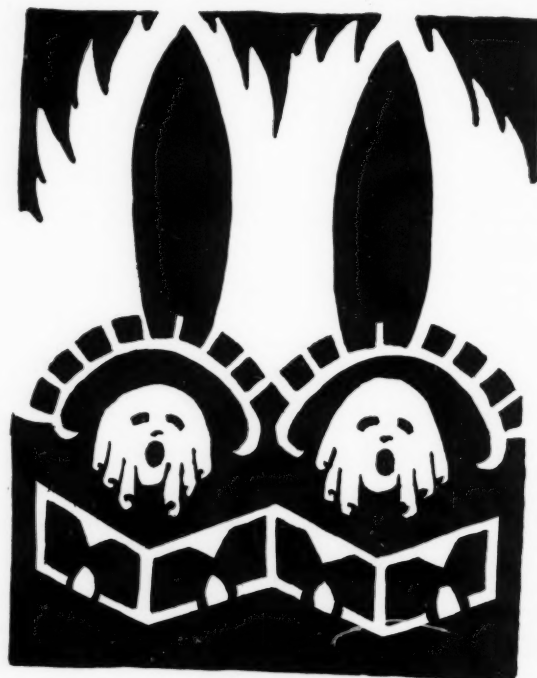
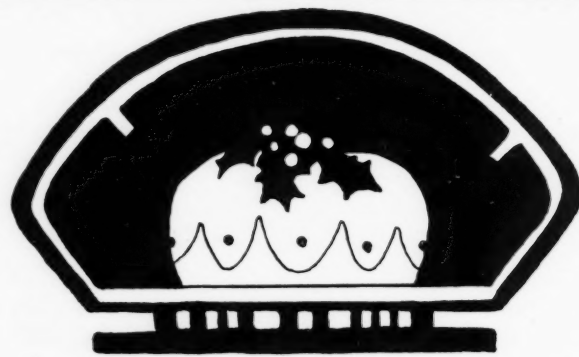
lines and masses. Then when the next value is added, that also must make a good pattern and not interfere with the first one. Each value should be an added beauty, and not detract from the others. The result should be an unusual, artistic arrangement in black and white, the beauty of which may be enhanced by the addition of some happy color. In a problem as varied as this one, all students are not able

to finish together, so those whose work was completed early, designed seals also. This was not obligatory, but all who had time desired to do so. The results are here and will speak for themselves. The color schemes are all cheerful and brilliant, many of the colors being used in high values with enough dark cool color to bring about a pleasing proportion of each resulting in a unified whole.

Attractive Christmas seals make a most stimulating class project



FOR DECEMBER



Attractive Christmas seals showing a variety of design problems well suited to block printing